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MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION	Senate	DATE	May 7, 2010
FROM	Rolf Mathewes, Acting Chair	PAGES	1/1
RE:	Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies English Language and Literacy Requirement Revision (10-30)		

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Rolf Mathewes".

Action undertaken by the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies at its meeting of May 6, 2010, gives rise to the following recommendation:

Motion:

- That Senate approve the revisions to the English Language and Literacy Requirements.

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MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION	Senate Community on Undergraduate Studies	DATE	May 7, 2010
FROM	Kate Ross Senior Director and Registrar Student Enrollment	PAGES	1/1
RE:	Proposed Changes to the Calendar Entry on English Language and Literacy Requirement		

Motion #1

That SCUS approve and recommend to Senate the separation of the English language admission requirements from the degree requirements. Rename 'The English Language and Literacy Requirements' to 'English Language Admission Requirement' and 'Writing Intensive Course Prerequisite'.

Motion #2

That SCUS approve and recommend to Senate the inclusion of minimum years of instruction in the English language in the English Language Admission requirement.

Background

June, 2004 Senate Meeting: The policy on "New Admissions and Continuation Requirement pertaining to English Competencies and Writing Skills" was approved. The policy took effect for Fall 2006 with a request for review within 3 years. The new policy introduced a threshold used to admit or decline students based on grade in English 12 and/or LPI score.

November, 2006 Senate Meeting: revisions to the literacy admissions criteria were passed in an effort to simplify the admissions process to support successful recruitment. The threshold scores in English 12 were adjusted and changes were made to way the LPI test scores were used; the scores were used in conjunction with the English 12 grade as a way of streamlining students into FAL or W courses.

April, 2007 Senate Meeting: The following motion was approved in an attempt to streamline the admission process: SFU will harmonize the English Language Requirement and the Literacy Requirement as the 'English Language and Literacy Requirement'.

Discussion

Consultation with SFU faculty experts with experience in issues related to acquisition of English as an additional language indicates that years of study alone are not a reliable threshold for proficiency and readiness for university studies in English. UBC has just completed a review of their English Language Admission Standard (ELAS) and their research supports this. UBC has found that students who did not do well in first year were more likely to have met their ELAS via

years of study alone rather than a performance standard (TOEFL, etc.). As a result, UBC has added an additional requirement to their current English Language Admission Standard to include a minimum level of English for students studying in an English speaking curriculum. This is similar to our own minimum requirement of 60% in English 12.

In 2004, the policy on “New Admissions and Continuation Requirement pertaining to English Competencies and Writing Skills” removed years of instruction in an English speaking curriculum as part of our English Language requirement. This change along with the increase in the number of off-shore schools teaching Canadian curriculum and the intensified recruitment initiatives by local and national school districts of international non-native English speaking students has resulted in a dramatic increase in the admission of students who have demonstrated through their academic achievement that they are not well-prepared to study in the English language. These students are only required to provide a minimum grade of 60% in English 12 in order to be considered for admission. Many of these students have only studied for one or two years in English. In some cases, inflated grades in English 12 have resulted in students who cannot speak English not only being admitted, but receiving credit for FAL (based on the English grade) and allowed direct entry into a W course.

The policies surrounding the English Language and Literacy requirement dealt only with students who were presenting English 12 or its equivalent at the time of admission. In the development of these policies, admission standards for international students were not clearly defined or addressed.

The intent of the motion approved in April 2007 was to streamline our internal processing. This did not work and created confusion for our applicants and our staff. In an effort to create clarity, there needs to be clear differentiation between the two requirements: applicants must meet a minimum standard to be eligible for admission; admitted students must meet another standard to register in W courses.

Proposed Calendar Entry

English Language Admission Requirement

English is the language of instruction at Simon Fraser University. All applicants, regardless of country of origin or citizenship status, will be required to demonstrate competence in the English language prior to admission. Competence is required in all four of the following skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing. Applicants to undergraduate programs must demonstrate English language competence in one of the following ways:

Completion of the last three years of full-time secondary school education in English in Canada. A minimum grade of 60% in English 12, English Literature 12, English 12 First Peoples or its equivalent in other provinces is required. (link to equivalent courses)

Completion of the last three years of full-time secondary school education in English in a country in which the principal language of instruction is English. A minimum grade of C or 60% in Senior level English is required. (link to list of countries)

Completion of the last four years of full-time secondary school education in English at a recognized international school in a country in which the principal language of instruction is not English. A minimum grade of C or 60% in Senior level English is required. (link to list of eligible schools)

Completion of IB Diploma Program including English A1 or A2 (HL or SL)

Completion of a three unit English (ENGL) course or a certified W (writing intensive) course for which Simon Fraser University grants transfer credit with a minimum grade of C.

Successful completion of the Simon Fraser University English Bridge Program

Obtain a satisfactory score on one of the following English Language Proficiency tests:

International English Language Testing System (IELTS) with a minimum score of 6.0 on the Academic Modules

TOEFL iBT (Test of English as a Foreign Language internet based test) with an overall score of 88 or better with a minimum score of 20 in each of the four components (listening, speaking, writing, reading)

TOEFL CBT (Test of English as a Foreign language computer based test) with a minimum score of 230 including a minimum essay score of 4.5

TOEFL CBT with a minimum score of 250

Writing-Intensive Course Prerequisite

All students must successfully complete at least two Writing-Intensive (W) courses in order to graduate with a Bachelor's degree. Following admission, in order to register in a Writing-Intensive course, students must have achieved one of the following:

- a minimum final blended grade of 75% in English 12 or English Literature 12 (or the equivalent)
- a minimum score of 6.5 on the IELTS
- a minimum grade of C in a three unit English (ENGL) course or a certified W (writing intensive) course for which Simon Fraser University grants transfer credit
- a minimum score of 4 on the essay section of the Language Proficiency Index (LPI) and 50% or higher on all other parts
- a minimum grade of 4 on IB English A1 or A2 (HL or SL)
- a minimum score of 4 on AP English
- a minimum score of 600 on SAT Writing
- a minimum score of 10 on ACT Writing
- a minimum grade of C in SFU's Foundations of Academic Literacy Course (FALX99)